



## COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

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Dear Healthcare Professional:

**Virginia will participate, Saturday, October 26, 2013 in the seventh National Prescription Drug Take-Back Day.** Sponsored by the Drug Enforcement Administration, this collaborative effort between state and local law enforcement agencies provides residents with an opportunity to dispose of potentially dangerous controlled substances from their medicine cabinets in an environmentally safe manner. Collection activities will take place from **10:00 a.m. through 2:00 p.m.** at sites designated by law enforcement throughout Virginia. To find a collection site nearby or for more information, click on the following link: [http://www.deadiversion.usdoj.gov/drug\\_disposal/takeback/index.html](http://www.deadiversion.usdoj.gov/drug_disposal/takeback/index.html). Please note that this service is free and anonymous; no questions asked.

During the last National Prescription Drug Take-Back Day on April 27, 2013, 742,497 pounds (371 tons) of prescription medications were collected from members of the public at more than 5,829 locations operated by DEA and state and local law enforcement. When added to the collections from the previous six National Prescription Drug Take-Back events, more than 2.8 million pounds (1,409 tons) of prescription medications have been removed from circulation nationwide.

Prescription drug abuse is the fastest growing drug problem in the United States. According to the 2011 Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH), twice as many Americans regularly abused prescription drugs than the number of those who regularly used cocaine, hallucinogens, heroin and inhalants combined. That same study revealed more than 70 percent of people abusing prescription pain relievers got them through friends or relatives. Therefore, it is important for prescription drugs to be disposed of properly to help reduce the risk of prescription drug diversion and abuse. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), in 2010, more than 38,000 people died from drug overdoses, and nearly 60 percent of these deaths involved prescription drugs.

Health care practitioners can directly impact prescription drug abuse by educating patients regarding the proper disposal of medications. Please consider posting or providing to your patients the attached information regarding this opportunity to properly dispose of unwanted drugs.

For more information please contact Ralph Orr, Director of the Virginia Prescription Monitoring Program at 804-367-4566 or by email at [pmp@dhp.virginia.gov](mailto:pmp@dhp.virginia.gov).

Sincerely,

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